

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 028710

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ORIGIN NEA-02

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

INFO RUSBAE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1044

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

S E C R E T STATE 028710

FOLLOWING REPEAT BANGKOK 1964 ACTION SECSTATE INFO LONDON
05 FEB

QUOTE

S E C R E T BANGKOK 1964

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS : MARR, UK, IO, TH

SUBJECT : NOTIFICATION OF DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION

REF: A. STATE 22764; B. STATE 19914

1. WE INFORMED PHAEN WANNAMETHEE, UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, OF OUR DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION PLANS FEBRUARY 5 (REF A). WE DREW ON THE RATIONALE IN REF B, AND ALSO LEFT A BRIEF AIDE-MEMOIRE OUTLINING THE EXPANSION. WE EXPLAINED THAT WE WERE INFORMING ALL NATIONS BORDERING THE INDIAN OCEAN LITTORAL OF THESE PLANS, AND THAT WE WISHED TO NOTIFY THAILAND IN ADVANCE OF ANY PUBLICITY WHICH MIGHT RESULT. THE BRITISH EMBASSY FOLLOWED UP WITH THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE MFA POLITICAL DEPARTMENT LATER FEBRUARY 5. WE ALSO PASSED THE INFORMATION TO THE SUPREME COMMAND.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 028710

2. WE SAID THAT THE EXPANSION WAS AIMED AT PROVIDING LOGISTICAL

AND OPERATIONAL SUPPORT FOR REGULAR VISITS TO THE INDIAN OCEAN WHICH THE VIETNAM WAR HAD CURTAILED. THE U.S. HAD HISTORICALLY MAINTAINED A PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AND DIEGO GARCIA HAD ALREADY BEEN IN OPERATIONAL USE. THE EXPANSION WAS TO ACCOMMODATE OUR RETURN TO A POLICY OF MORE FREQUENT NAVAL VISITS. WE DID NOT INTEND TO ENTER INTO A COMPETITION WITH THE SOVIETS ON NUMBERS OF SHIPS.

3. PHAEN OBSERVED THAT THE PRC WOULD PROBABLY APPROVE THE US/UK ACTION AS A BALANCE TO THE SOVIET PRESENCE. HE ALSO SPECULATED THAT DIEGO GARCIA WOULD FACILITATE THE BRITISH CAPABILITY TO RETURN TO SINGAPORE IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY. PHAEN ASKED ABOUT THE REACTION OF INDIA AND SRI LANKA TO THIS PLAN IN RELATION TO THEIR "ZONE OF PEACE" PRONOUNCEMENTS. WE SAID WE DID NOT YET HAVE A READING.

4. WASHINGTON: PLEASE REPEAT AS REQUIRED TO ADDRESSEES ON REF A.
KINTNER UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

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